

Dream Jobs: Hairdresser

By Leo Benedictus, The Guardian, adapted by Newsela staff on 12.16.16

Word Count **371**



TOP: Hair stylist trainee Fatima Hussein practices on a mannequin at the Cut and Color Friseur Klier hair salon in the Alexa shopping mall in Berlin, Germany, May 17, 2013. Photo: Getty Images.

Jessica Leverett works in a hair salon. It is called Zappas and it is not far from London, England. The salon is noisy. You can hear the clatter of scissors and pop music.

In The Business For 12 Years

Leverett appears serious and completely in charge of her salon. She is 26 years old and has been in the business for 12 years. She is now an experienced hairdresser.

Many hairdressers enjoy their work and Leverett thinks she knows why. "We always work late hours," she says. "And we don't get paid extremely well for it. That's why everyone that does it has to love their job."

Shop Helper When She Was 14

Leverett's early years in the business were not easy. "I had quite a hard time," she says. She remembers her days as a shop helper when she was 14. She says she wanted to quit because it was such hard work. She did things like sweep hair from the floor.

Her First Haircut

When Leverett was finally allowed to cut hair she was worried. "My very first haircut... I actually cut my lady's neck," she remembers.

At Zappas, Leverett is a manager. That means she gets to cut hair and be the boss. She enjoys doing both. Mostly, she likes being with customers.

Sometimes, Leverett has customers who are not happy. She tries to make them happy before they leave the salon.

Her Favorite Customer

Leverett's favorite customer is a woman with long hair who wants to cut it short. "Some girls are scared of it, but I love chopping it all off," she says. "That's the most amazing thing in the world."

Job Stats

Current position: Salon manager at Zappas.

Pay: It depends on how many customers she has. She also gets paid for management and training. "I take home roughly £1,500 to £1,600 (about \$1,860 to \$1,983) a month."

Hours: "A five-day week with long days, and we only get a 45-minute lunch break. Sometimes we do have little breaks between customers."

Career high: "Every day is different, and every person you talk to is different."

Career low: "Pay and hours, probably. We love what we do, but we all feel we deserve a bit more."